

The

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Agitations Galore Everywhere In Country Opposition Parties Using Them For Selfish Ends

The country is in convulsions. As if the Assam agitation over the issue of "foreigners" was not enough, the peasants, having realised the potentiality of their power, have risen in revolt against unremunerative prices of their produce almost in all states. And they are being utilised by opposition parties for their own personal ends.

In Punjab, the "Jail Bharo" agitation, which was to be launched on December 26, has been postponed for the time being. This is partly due to the students backing out and the farmers feeling satisfied, by and large, with the new sugarcane price offered by the mills. This took the wind, to a large extent, out of opposition sails.

The ire over steep rise in bus fares still remains. The government has a good case. Bus fares in Punjab are still the lowest in the northern region. Operational costs of buses have risen steeply during the last four years when fares were last hiked. The price of a bus chassis has gone up by 54 percent. The price of diesel is up by 72 percent and that of spares by 51 percent. But there is no reason why the fare hike of 20 percent could not be imposed in stages instead of in one big fiat.

The situation in Maharashtra is becoming graver as thousands of marchers converged on Nagpur to gherao the state assembly session. Chief Minister Antulay tried to thwart this attempt by ending the assembly session by one week in advance on December 26. The marchers, not to be outdone, changed their schedule to beat that date. Exasperated, Mr Antulay decided on a crack-down, though in an arbitrary manner.

The whole thing has been handled in a surprisingly ham-handed manner. As Mr Sharad Pawar said, he and other leaders were arrested under an ordinance promulgated by the state to curb anti-social, communal or other

dangerous activities. This is reprehensible. How could the long march be said to constitute a threat under any of the above categories? The very fact that a magistrate found "no ground" for detention of Mr Pawar and 440 others speaks for itself. It shows the state government feels unnerved.

Peaceful marches to the state assembly buildings and even to parliament house in New Delhi are by now common enough. It passes comprehension, therefore, that the Maharashtra government should have taken a grave view of the "dindi". Mr Antulay could afford to take a relaxed view of the stir. Seen in the context of his frequent pronouncements about the failure of the parliamentary system and his preference for the presidential system, it amounts to disturbing show of impatience with restraints on executive power. It is in this type of mentality that the real

threat to democracy lies.

The farmers' stir in Uttar Pradesh has not, fortunately, assumed the dimensions Chaudhari Charan Singh had aspired for. This is due largely to the sugar mills having announced higher prices for sugarcane days before the Jat leader could swing the people. But one has to keep the fingers crossed about Haryana.

Assam is getting stuck deeper and deeper in the marshes of its own making. The current 13-day bandh, organised by the agitators, has led to violent incidents at
(Continued on next page)

New Example Of Discrimination Against Sikhs

Radio And TV Ignored Guru Tegh Bahadur's Martyrdom Day Celebrations

To the long list of Sikh grouches which have remained unredressed since 1947 can now be added one more: Gross neglect of their gurburabs by All India Radio and Doordarshan. The rub comes when both these media hold sole monopoly in the country.

The latest example of this gross discrimination was located on Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom day which fell early this month. TV networks completely ignored this historic occasion. All India Radio's bulletins in English and almost all Indian languages did not contain a word about it. The only exception was the Punjabi bulletins which carried a line or two.

This is all the more galling because the Guru sacrificed his life in Delhi itself and not for his own religion but to save Hindus and Hinduism from extinction. This was a feat unparalleled in world annals because no other sage or prophet had laid down his life for another faith. It was also

a protest against political tyranny, religious intolerance, and forcible conversion of Hindus into Muslims by Aurangzeb.

And these are the very ideals which our present-day rulers proclaim from housetops to have tagged. But, unfortunately, they do not practice what they preach.

Secularism does not mean negation of religion. As our former president, late Dr. Zakir Husain, had stressed, it means equal-respect for all religions.

Delhi TV has been producing and telecasting hours-long programmes on all other religious festivals like Janam Ashtami, Ram Naumi, Mahavir Jayanti, Budha Purnima, Id, Moharram and

Christmas. But on Guru Nanak's birthday this year a few minutes Shabad Kirtan was considered enough.

Strangest thing is that on Sanjay Gandhi's birthday which fell on December 14, both AIR and Doordarshan went all out to highlight the occasion. AIR's bulletins in English and other languages led with the celebrations held in various parts of the country, mainly because he was prime minister's son. Sanjay was a man of parts and had some ideals but he was not a national figure as he was made out to be.

At least he was miles below our sages and prophets. Then why could not Delhi TV devote a few minutes, if not an hour or so, to Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom day passes our conception.

Doordarshan highbrows have got their priorities topsy-turvy.

(Continued from previous page)

many places. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is very right that the government could not sit with folded hands when a few hotheads hold the state and the country to ransom. There is a limit to one's patience, even the government's. There cannot be mass uprooting of people. Because such an operation would create more problems than it would solve. After all, Assamese cannot enjoy the fruits of labour of people of other states while denying the latter their own produce. They cannot have their bread buttered on both sides. Divisive elements cannot be permitted to have sway anywhere. Any violence has to be crushed with a heavy hand.

India has been known, through ages, for traditions of hospitality and goodwill as well as its willingness to assimilate all that is good everywhere else. Indian culture had followed an open door, open window policy accepting many ideas and influences from other civilisations. Unfortunately, the Assam agitators have not understood this vital ingredient of our genius.

NOTICE

There will be no issue of our paper dated January 5, 1981. Our next issue will be special Guru Gobind Singh Number (5th & 12th January, 1981 combined) and will be posted on January 10, 1980.

On The Eve Of Annual Art Festival :

Lalit Kala Akademi

By : Sardar Jaiteg Singh 'Anant'

The name of Punjab Lalit Kala Akademi has got special significance in the Northern India due to its achievements and progress in the field of art. It is the unique Akademi of Punjab engaged in encouraging and promoting study and research in the fields of paintings, sculptures and architecture and applied arts including photography. It was established in 1966. Due to the reorganisation of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, it suffered a heavy loss. Then from 1968, it again started its activities in popularising art among the masses.

From 1968 to 1972, the Akademi organised various art Exhibitions of various artists at a number of places, which include its three Annual Exhibitions also. Due to some financial difficulties, its activities were restricted to some extent. But from November, 1975, when Dr. M.S. Randhawa was appointed as its Chairman, the Akademi organised about one and a half dozen Exhibitions from 1975 to 1979 in which five Annual Exhibitions are also included. In these Exhibitions, the works of artists such as, paintings, sculptures, drawings, graphics, etc. were displayed. Moreover, during this period, few artists' workshops were arranged by the Akademi where the artists prepared their paintings on the

spot.

The Akademi is engaged in promoting cooperation among artists and art associations and to encourage the establishment and development of such associations. It has decided to publish and to promote the publication of literature on art including monographs, journals, art-albums, etc. The Akademi intends to give recognition to approved art associations and also assist them. It is making all efforts to encourage and foster the revival and development of visual folk arts. The library of the Akademi is equipped with both Indian and foreign art books which will be a boon for the future generations. It also proposes to give awards and scholarships to deserving artists, art historians and art critics for their outstanding achievements.

In the field of art, the achievements made in the year 1980 by the Akademi will ever be remembered in the entire Northern India. For the first time, the Akademi organised Photographic and Sculptures Exhibitions and brought before the people, this hidden art. The Akademi gave away prizes and awards of Rs. 13,500/- alongwith certificates to the outstanding exhibits at the Paintings Exhibition, Photographic and Sculptures Exhibitions. The entire credit

for this work goes to Dr. M.S. Randhawa, who has always given maximum encouragement to the budding artists of Punjab. The Akademi has also purchased so many excellent works displayed at various Exhibitions at Chandigarh from the Artists. It also sponsored an Exhibition of All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society, New Delhi and brought it to Chandigarh. Moreover, Kumari Beri's Exhibition was also sponsored.

The Akademi is organising its Annual Art Festival on 27th December, 1980 in the Government Art Gallery, Chandigarh. It is the first occasion, when artists in such a great number would be participating in the Exhibition. Many national fame artists are also participating. Another feature of the Exhibition will be of Artists' Workshop which will be held at the office of the Akademi, No. 208, Sector 36, Chandigarh, where national fame and state awards winner artists will prepare their paintings on the spot. It will be a source of great knowledge for the young artists.

The Akademi is constructing its own building near the Rose Garden, Chandigarh. In such a peace atmosphere, artists meetings will be held, seminars and conferences will be organised, Exhibitions will be held and guest artists will stay there. Dr. M.S. Randhawa, its Chairman has been working day and night to take this Akademi to a place, where its name will be regarded respectfully not only in Punjab but also throughout the country.



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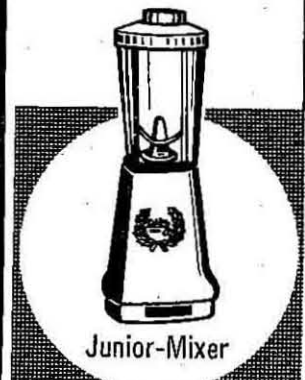
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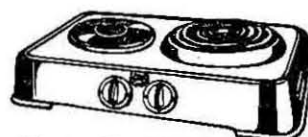
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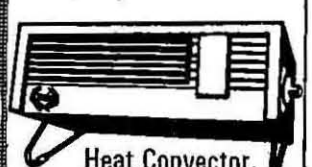
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A THOUGHT FROM GURBANI

Dirty hands, feet and body
 Can be washed clean with water;
 Soiled clothes washed clean with soap.
 But when the mind becomes dark with sin
 Naught else but the Love of the Divine Name
 Can restore it to purity.

—Guru Nanak

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FACTIONAL DESIGNS

A piquant situation has arisen with the resignation of five members of the executive of the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee this week in protest against the "dictatorial attitude" of the president and other members. Their wrath was aroused because the DSGMC president had invited a Sikh minister of the central government for addressing the congregation on Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom day and even presented a siropa to the latter; this was despite the fact that this minister has been hobnobbing with Sant Nirankaris and the DSGMC executive had earlier passed a resolution not to have any truck with such persons. It was also an open violation of the Akal Takht Hukamnama which had called for a boycott of Sant Nirankaris in all spheres of life, and this edict is binding on all Sikhs; it should be more so in case of office-bearers of an elected body like the DSGMC which runs Sikh shrines in the Indian capital. If these men can set such a bad example of religious misbehaviour, then next stage is the deluge.

Siropas should be reserved for the really eminent and the most devout who have done some signal service to the community; by conferring them on every Tom, Dick and Harry, we are cheapening an august and time-honoured institution. It would be better if their number is reduced to the barest minimum so that they are bestowed upon the really deserving. If Sikh leaders could meet in a conclave and lay down norms, it would be ideal.

Like similar bodies elsewhere, the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee is plagued by dissensions and factional fights. Neither the ordinary members nor the office-bearers, barring a handful of honourable exceptions, are devoted to the propagation of the Great Gurus' message or the better administration of the shrines and the educational institutions under them. They are more keen on filling their own coffers by means more foul than fair, on concerning glory to themselves, and on downing the adversaries. As annual election of office-bearers draws near, this warfare is assuming serious proportions. Because of this, the affairs of the holy shrines suffer.

Some Delhi Sikhs have protested to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi against proposed amendments to the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Act. One clause, which

Wrong Approach

A reshuffling of senior officers is an inevitable aftermath of a change in ministry but this upheaval has to be kept within reasonable confines; otherwise, demoralisation sets in and the administration of the state suffers. But the Darbara Singh ministry has outstripped all other states in this respect. Now Punjab has a Hindu chief secretary, a Hindu inspector-general of police and a Hindu development commissioner, also 65 per cent of the departmental secretaries are Hindus, this is surprising when Sikhs are 55 per cent of the state's population. All this could be taken as a chance happening but for the curious thinking which actuates Sikhs in the Congress (I). In their blind bid to prove that they are not "communalists" and are real "nationalists", they try to be more loyal than the king himself, as the adage goes.

These Sikhs of the ruling party are bitten by the fear bug that if they did justice to officers of their community or did something for the Sikhs at large, they would be equated with Akalis and, thus, hooted down as communal. Therefore, they feel their salvation lies in hunting down Sikh officers, except for a favourite few, ignoring Sikh complaints, and uplifting other segments of the populace, especially Hindus. These politicians believe that if they decry Sikhs day in and day out, they would be hailed as "true nationalists". Against this, Hindu ministers go out of the way to listen to the grouses of their followers and members of their community; there is nothing bad in it, as wrongs done have got to be righted. But why Sikh ministers

of the present Punjab ministry must feel allergic to Sikh demands or Sikh officers? There is no reasonable explanation for this behaviour. Or should one assume that this is new type of secularism practised by the new Sikh ministers?

Under the parliamentary system which we have adopted, the civil services are required to serve the government of the day with sincerity, honesty and devotion; their job is to render advice to the ministers fearlessly according to their lights, but once a decision has been taken by the minister, then they must implement it without hitch or hesitation, even when it runs counter to their advice. That is why the minister is held responsible for acts of omission and commission of his department. The civil servants are pillars, rather steel pillars, on which rests the entire edifice of our country and government. Ministers come and go; they have their political plums to distribute, constituencies to nurse and followers to please. From this can be born political corruption and at times injustice. It is the civil servants who have to hold the balance even and prevent it from tilting in favour of or against anyone.

If some officers were close to the outgoing Badal ministry, it was not their fault. They must not be penalised for serving the government of the day. Recent wholesale transfers of deputy commissioners and superintendents of police was in bad taste. The only silver lining is that Sardar Darbara Singh has not allowed the MLAs to have any vital say in the posting and transfers of officers.

is sought to be deleted, had laid down that only those members, who had passed the Matriculation or equivalent examination, can hold any office; the main aim was to prevent half-baked and illiterate Jathedars from usurping power on the strength of their own following purchased with tons of money; another thinking was that fairly educated people could rid the shrines of the dross which had accumulated during the rule of earlier committees. But this dream has not come true because the educated among the members have been afflicted by the same maladies which had gripped the semi-educated or the illiterate.

Things can look better if we separate religion from politics. We should ensure that no politician seeks membership of any gurdwara management committee, much less becomes an office-bearer; such committees should be the sole preserve of those men who are sworn to purity, piety and poverty and who have no inclination to hanker after mundane gains. Until and unless this prescription is laid down our gurdwaras shall continue to be hotbeds of intrigues and feuds.

A View Of Our Times

Assam Imbroglia

The presence in Assam of people who have been branded, rightly or wrongly, aliens is a problem which has been defying solution. It is at the root of agitation which has already caused misery to the State and anxiety to the whole country. Oil refineries are not being allowed to function. The damage caused to the economy is colossal. No solution is in sight. Charges and counter-charges are being traded. The sponsors of the agitation are considered uncompromising, unreasonable and unrelenting in their stand. On the other hand, the government has been accused of deliberately creating a law and order situation to malign the movement and pave the way for brutal and oppressive measures. This has been going on for quite

some time. How long shall we continue to look upon the deteriorating situation helplessly? It is a national problem and must be viewed from a national and not a partisan angle. It is time that the Government must make up its mind and take the public in confidence. If a negotiated settlement is not in sight, the Government must show the courage to enforce by legitimate means what is considered just, reasonable and in the best interests of the nation. The present uncertainty must end. The present attempt in installing a Congress (I) ministry by inducing defections from other parties is hardly the solution to this vexed problem. The present situation must be contained and rooted out even if it calls for some unpalatable measures.

Andhra Pradesh Ministry

The strength of Anjiah Ministry in Andhra Pradesh rose to 61 on December 2, 1980. 16 are Cabinet ministers while the rest are ministers of State. Every third AP Congress (I) MLA gets a berth. It is a new Indian record for the largest council of ministers. Well done. May the

tribe increase. It is a sincere attempt on Anjiah's part to reduce unemployment. It is a different matter that the beginning has been made from the top and not from the ground level. Cheer up, my countrymen. The charity always begins at home but in this case, it will also not travel beyond.

Blinded Victims of Bihar

31 undertrials in the Bhagalpur Central Jail were blinded. They were tortured. Their eyes were punctured with cycle spokes and later acid was injected. The crime is monstrous. There was outcry in the Parliament. The Prime Minister has expressed her Government's distress and her own anguish. The Home Minister accepted the Government's moral responsibility for this outrage. What has happened is a medieval kind of atrocity. It is horrifying. Men have become brutes. An enquiry has been ordered. Ex-gratia payments to the victims have been announced. Expert medical aid is also being arranged. The shameful

happening must be thoroughly probed particularly to ascertain how long this ghastly business has been going on. It is a national tragedy and must be tackled as such. According to a report, the policemen in uniform staged a demonstration in Bhagalpur on December 2, 1980 demanding withdrawal of suspension orders against the 15 Policemen charged with the blinding of the undertrials. What do you say to this? Is it not adding insult to injury. The authorities must take note and act with courage and determination against such arm-twisting tactics. The aggressor is trying emerge us the aggrieved!

Stir in RAW and CBI

All does not seem well with the top intelligence gathering and investigating agencies in the country. More than 55 employees of RAW have been suspended. The CBI Officers have formed a new association. All these are signs of simmering resentment and bad management. These are sensitive organisations where discipline is of the primary impor-

tance. These organisations had a sheltered and protected existence for too long. It is time that there is a parliamentary probe in the functioning of these agencies to find out the causes of present agitation. Silence will be suicidal. Temporisation will be dangerous. Things must be set right with a firm hand.

Dear Desai is Willing

Shri Desai is not desperate but he is decidedly determined to lead the nation, if not as its Prime Minister, as a leader of the opposition for removal of the Indira Gandhi Government. His only sweet and reasonable condi-

tion is that all the opposition parties should make a request to him collectively. Shri Desai is either innocent like a lamb or ignorant of the realities of the Indian political scene. What is there so special about Shri Desai

By : Lt. Col. J.S. Guleria (Retd.)

that he thinks that all the opposition parties should go to him in the sack cloth and ashes and implore him collectively to lead a nation-wide movement against Smt. Indira Gandhi? Is not it downright arrogance on his part to think on these lines. The opposition may have no programme to place before the country. It may not coalesce together to form a unified party. It may have nothing in common excepting their common hostility against Smt. Indira Gandhi. But there is no dearth of enterprising is a leader in his own right. In fact, the trouble with the opposition is that it has far too many leaders, each of whom considers him far too superior to the combined wisdom of the other leaders in the opposition taken together. Further, what is Shri Desai's special merit and claim which entitles him to hope that he is entitled to a collective request from the opposition to lead the nation against Smt. Indira Gandhi. Shri Desai seems to have forgotten the old adage. You can fool all the people for some-time, some people for all the time and not all the people for

all the time. How does he imagine that Babu Jagjivan Ram will be prepared to join such a request to him. May be, Shri Desai does not count him as a leader!

Shri Desai is a true Gandhian, a selfless worker and is ever willing to serve the nation and its interests. There can be no two opinions about this trait of Shri Desai. How will Shri Desai react if the Congress (I) led by Smt. Indira Gandhi was to request him, collectively to join the Congress (I) in which he will be assigned an important role, keeping in view his seniority and experience. After all, Congress (I) is also at work in the service of the nation. Shri Desai should, in fairness to all his countrymen, answer this question. He is known for uprightness. It is to be hoped that he will not evade the issue. If he chooses to accept this request, he can be of a warm welcome in the Congress (I) camp. Getting in may be a little difficult but getting out will pose no problem. This can be verified from Shri Bahuguna.

Culture, Man and Society

Smt. Sheila Kaul, the Minister of State for Education and Social Welfare left New Delhi on December 2, for Sofia to participate in the International Conference on "The Rule and Importance of Culture for the development of Man and Society". You cannot afford to neglect culture, man or society. These are serious matters which need attention at the level of a Minister if the

nation is to progress. You should not bring in irrelevant factor. Like price of sugar and prevailing shortages of consumer items of daily needs. These can wait but we cannot allow culture to stagnate and society to degenerate. The visit is in the national interest. Let us have more of such visits. These are refreshing and rewarding.

Grievance Cell

Another gimmick of the Punjab Ministry. The Ministers will sit in the grievance cell established at the Secretariat on particular days to hear people's grievances and give appropriate orders on the spot where possible. The question is: grievances against whom? Who can dare open his mouth and ventilate his grievance against the corruption of ministers, high-handedness of bureaucrats, callousness of functionaries at various levels and

unresponsiveness of the police? It is all tall talk. It will yield nothing. The best course will be for Sardar Darbara Singh and his ministers to move about incognito if they are really interested in solving the problems of the public. This means solid work without any publicity. Who is interested in it? It is an effort at image building without any desire to look into matters agitating the public mind.

Bengal Bandh

Bengal Government has set up a new record in organising a bandh in the State to focus attention on the rising prices. Surely, this does not behove a Government. This act cannot be viewed with a sense of equanimity. It is a bad precedent. A Government is expected to work and deliver goods and not organise bandhs as has been done

by the Bengal Government. No right thinking person can uphold this action. It deserves to be condemned in the strongest possible terms. Further, it is depriving the parties in opposition of their legitimate functions. The centre must not sit quiet about it. Cannot the pleasure of the President be invoked to set the matters right?

Declining Rupee

The value of a rupee is down to 46.08 Paise. This is related to consumer price index shifted to 1970=100. With the galloping inflation, the value is expected

to come down further. At least, something is coming down when prices are going up! It is a matter of how you look at the situation.

THE NIRMALAS

By : Prof. Surjit Singh Gandhi

The religious order started by Guru Nanak was without any particular form and just comprised the teachings of Guru Nanak and righteous living taught by him to his pupils. But in the course of time, other schools found it necessary to refer to it by some name, for the name 'Sikh' was then ambiguous being used by the Buddhists. Yogis of Gorakh and the followers of all Hindu schools. Therefore, Guru Nanak's school, with its emphasis on purity was referred to as the pure path (Nirmal Panth) by others and later even by Guru Nanak's Sikhs in reference to themselves for their distinction. Bhai Gurdas refers to Guru Nanak's school Nirmal Path (Pure Path). Similarly Bhatts use this term in reference to Guru Amar Das and Guru Arjan Dev.

Upto Guru Gobind Singh's time no distinction was made between Nirmal Panth and other names 'Nanak Panth', 'Gurmukh Panth' and 'Guru Sikh Panth'.

But with Guru Gobind Singh, the annotation did not remain as wide as it was before; it began to be used in reference to a particular school committed to definite goals and programmes.

As it is well known Guru Gobind Singh matured and concretised most of his plans at Paonta—one of those plans was the propagation of Sikhism through the medium of literature throughout India. It was with this object that Guru Gobind Singh wanted to establish a special order of his Sikhs particularly to make comparative study of religions and also interpret classical Indian tradition in terms of the basic philosophy of Sikhism.

The project thus conceived had incidental advantages as well. Since times immemorial learning and teaching had been the exclusive privilege of Brahmins, Sanyasis or Vairagis (ascetics); but the project of the Guru was sure to give a strong blow to the idea of class learning and of missionaries belonging to a particular caste.

Since most of the classical Indian religious literature was available in Sanskrit, the Guru found it imperative to make arrangement for the teaching of Sanskrit to his followers. Accordingly, Guru Gobind Singh asked his court poet Pandit Raghu Nath to do the needful. The Pandit politely and very diplomatically replied that he was prohibited by convention to teach the language of the Gods (Deva Bhasha) and the holy scriptures to non-dvijas i.e. Shudras and women. Guru Gobind Singh admonished him for his ego and pride for his most unreasonable stand. The same day, Guru Gobind Singh also invited the udasis to assist him in seeing his plans through.

They also did not respond and were not ready to effect any change in their traditional outlook and approach.

Ultimately, the Guru selected a dozen of Sikhs from all classes, castes, and creeds and sent them to Benaras. Their names were (1) Pandit Karma Singh, (2) Pandit Rama Singh, (3) Pandit Ganda Singh, (4) Pandit Vir Singh, (5) Pandit Sobha Singh, (6) Dharam Singh, (7) Daya Singh, (8) Kesar Singh, (9) Muhkam Singh, (10) Gian Singh, (11) Gaja Singh, (12) Chanda Singh, (13) Saina Singh. All these chosen Sikhs studied under the guidance of Pandit Sadda Nand for six years. In the seventh year, they came back to the Guru who now had shifted to Anandpur.

Guru Gobind Singh was much pleased to find that they had become really good scholars and allotted them different duties. Pandit Karma Singh was asked to give sermons on Guru Granth Sahib in the Guru's court in the morning.

He did his job meticulously and nicely. The Guru having been deeply impressed by his exposition directed Bhai Mani Singh to become his student and learn six *darsanas*. Within a short time quite a few hundred scholars belonging to all castes were ready for missionary work.

As the number of Nirmalas increased, they were divided into two distinct branches: (i) Nirmala saints who wore the ascetic pink (Bhagva) robe given by the Guru and did not marry though they did not prohibit it, and in fact asked people to live a pious married life; (ii) the Nirmalas who adored white clothes. The latter were further split into two categories: the unmarried among them were referred to 'saint' but the married were referred to as Giani (knowledge).

Nirmalas exerted a lot to disseminate Sikhism and to bring about general awakening among the people. In the life time of Guru Gobind Singh, by his orders, Bhai Punjab Singh Nirmala came to the Punjab, settled down at Khadur. He so identified himself with the cause of the people that they adored him and thought it a good luck to enter into Sikh fold. His grand pupil Rocha Singh Nirmala was responsible for conversion, on a large scale, in the predominant Muslim areas of Kashmir and Pothohar (West Punjab).

After the death of Guru Gobind Singh, the Nirmalas spared no pains to spread the message of the Guru. They acted not only as torch bearer of Sikhism but also as conscience keepers and political advisers of

the Sikhs. When differences arose between Vinod Singh Trehan (in the seventh generation of Guru Angad Dev), Dharam Singh Nirmala advised him to leave Banda Singh Bahadur in the larger interest of the Sikhs. It was again Baba Dharam Singh who brought Vinod Singh in touch with Baba Dip Singh and Baba Ala Singh (the founder of Patiala State). Baba Ala Singh took Khandeki-Pahul in which Baba Dharam Singh, Baba Vinod Singh and Baba Dip Singh acted as Piyaras. Baba Ala Singh so much appreciated the sagacity of Baba Dhaam Singh that he gave the land where the ceremony was held to Baba Gurmukh Singh Nirmala, a pupil of Baba Dharam Singh Nirmala. One of the Panj Piyaras, Bhai Durgah Singh Nirmala settled down at Kankhal (two miles from Haridwar, U.P.). He was a great marks-man. He fought for Rai Ahmed of Najibabad against the Rohilas. Since Rai Ahmed of Najibabad was victorious, he offered a grant of land to Bhai Durgah Singh Nirmala on account of his service. Sant Nikka Singh was given a gift of thirty villages by Bibi Pradhan, the daughter of Baba Ala Singh. Sant ji refused to accept such a big grant for his maintenance and only kept one village, named Khudi near Barnala. Many other such gifts were given to the Nirmalas by the Khalsa for their much-needed services to them.

Sardar Dhyana Singh of Shahbad willed his estate to Sant Karm Singh Nirmala (Chote). Sardar Ganda Singh of Bhangi Misl offered thirteen villages to Sant Jai Singh Nirmala who instead of keeping it for himself passed it on to Udasi Dera of Santokh Das. Similarly Sardar Sadda Singh of Bahirwala gave a patta of seven villages to Sant Bhat Singh Nirmala in the year A.D. 1766. The offer was declined by the Sant but the Patta is still available at Bunga of Mana Singh Wala, Amritsar. Sardar Jai Singh's daughter-in-law donated two villages in favour of the Nirmala Dera at Kankhal.

In the year 1796, Maharaja Ranjit Singh offered a written sanad to Sant Nihal Singh Nirmala. The Sant passed on the property to Udasi Akhara of Santokh Das.

In the years when there was comparative peace in the Punjab after the failure of Ahmed Shah Abdali in his invasion, Nirmalas stepped up their activities of proselytization. It was during this period that they started visiting different places at the time of the Hindu festivals to

conduct their missionary work. This thing as well as the exclusive patronage of the Sikh chiefs to the Nirmalas caused a lot of heart-burning among the Hindu sects of *Sannyasis* and *Vairagis* who had always thought that the gifts would be given only to them by the chiefs.

The heart burning led, not unoften, to serious quarrels. At the Kumbh Mela of 1807 at Haridwar there was a polemical discussion between the Nirmalas on one side and the *Sannyasis* and *Bairagis* on the other. The Nirmalas made such a great philosophical impact on the people by showing the distinction between Guru Nanak's spirit—temporal philosophy and other schools of socio-religious philosophy that both *Sannyasis* and *Vairagis* accepted that a Nirmala whatever be his caste or creed, could enter any Hindu temple in India.

In the year 1819 at the Kumbha Mela at Kurukshetra the *Vairagis* physically led an attack on Nirmala gatherings and cut up Guru Granth Sahib with the sword.

This event caused a lot of stir among the Sikhs. The Udasis and Nirmalas put up a request of the various Sikh chiefs for help. Maharaja Karam Singh of Patiala, Sardar Karma Singh Nirmala of Shahbad with Nanu Singh of Shahbad, Sardar Rai Singh of Buria, Sardar Dasaundha Singh of Sadhora, Sardar Bhagel Singh of Malaud, Raja Jogh Singh of Kalsia, Sardar Rup Singh of Rupa and many other Sardars with their forces marched to Haridwar with the Maharaja of Patiala at head. The *Sannyasis* were easily put to flight. The *Vairagis* were also taught a lesson, their camp near Dahsha Prajapati's temples, was ransacked and their monasteries were razed to the ground. The *Sannyasis* were forced to abandon the malpractice of raising a rupee per person whose head was to be shaven there.

After this happening, the Nirmalas began to attend all the four Kumbha Melas at Haridwar, Nasik, Ujjain and Traveni. Most of the Gurdwaras at such places owed their existence to them. The 'Gurdwara Pakki Sangat of Traveni' built to perpetuate the memory of Guru Tegh Bahadur is with the Nirmalas even to-day.

It was through the sustained and consistent efforts of Nirmalas that many persons of the province of Sind (now in Pakistan) came into the Sikh fold. In the recent past, Sant Attar Singh did commendable work of proselytisation in Malwa.

Nirmalas have done commendable work in the field of comparative study of classical philosophy and have written books of great value in this connection in Sanskrit, Brijia, Hindi,

(Continued on page 10)

Like any other country, Maharaja Ranjit Singh also, had developed a system of honours and awards. He had realised the importance of rewarding good work done and the gallantry deeds performed by those serving him. He was of the opinion that "the heart of the receiver is expected to become elated on receiving such a grant at his hands". The honours included with *khillats*; awards, titles, etc. These are narrated hereunder.

Khillats. The distinguished services rendered to the Maharaja by the civil as well as military men were rewarded *khillats* which were of three types. A *khillat* of the first class comprised eleven garments, jewels, weapons and ornaments. The *khillats* of the second and third classes comprised seven and three garments respectively, and weapons and ornaments.

A *khillat* would include all or any of the following garments : (a) *doshala* (Kashmiri shawl), (b) A piece of *kimkhawab* (brocade), (c) A *dupatta* (scarf), (d) A *dastar* (turban), (e) pieces of *gulbadan* (a kind of striped silk cloth), (f) A *rumal* (handkerchief), (g) *Jamawar* (a kind of shawl cloth for a *choga* or long coat), and (h) a *kamarband* (waistband).

The weapons and ornaments that were included in *khillats* were : *Kara* (gold bracelet), *kantha* (gold necklace), *kangan* (gold bangles), *mala marvarid* (a gold chain set with pearls), *bazuband* (gold armet), *kalghi* (aigrette), *jigha* (a turban ornament), *sarpech* (also a turban ornament), *shamsher murassa* (sword with its handle inlaid with gold), *kard* (a dagger with ornamented handle), *tabr* (a sort of battle axe), and *tarkash* (ornamented quiver for arrows).

Special khillats. Besides, there were occasions, such as the visits of the distinguished guests to the Maharaja's Darbar, when a *khillat* had as many as fifteen to twenty-one garments together with jewelled ornaments and richly caprisoned animals like elephants and horses. For example, the Barakzai Chief of Peshawar when he visited the Lahore Darbar, was given a *khillat* consisting of eleven garments, two jewels, two fast running horses with jewel-studded saddles and one elephant with a silver *howdah*. Raja of Nabha visited the Darbar on 17th May, 1837, and was given a robe of honour comprising twenty-one garments, one elephant and one horse. Similarly, a special *khillat* comprising twenty-one pieces of garments, five jewels, a studded sword, a *kard*, one horse with a jewel-studded saddle, and a ring studded with *zammurd*, was given to Captain Wade, the British Political Assistant at Ludhiana.

There was another system, borrowed from the Mughals, of

bestowing special favours on officials in high positions, in that they were given permission to go about on elephants, in palkis or pinas (palanquin) and the use of a *nagarah* (kettle-drum).

Military decorations. Maharaja Ranjit Singh had a separate set of awards for his soldiers; these were awarded for meritorious services, and for the acts of gallantry and courage shown in battle. These were : *Hizbar-i-Jang* (The Lion in fight), *Zafar-Jang-Bahadur* (Victorious in War), *Samsam-ud-daula* (Sharp sword of the State), *Shujah-ud-daula* (Valour of the State), *Tahawur-panah* (Asylum of bravery), *Fateh-Nusrat-Nasib*.

Civilian titles. These were awarded for their honesty, sagacity, trustworthiness and industry. The titles were : *Dayanat-Panah* (Abode of honesty), *Firasat-dastgah* (Sagacious), *Mashakhas-panah* (Refuge of greatness), *Sardar-Bawaqar* (Sardar of dignity), *Qaisar-ul-Iqtadar* (Chief of exalted position), *Sarwar-e-Geroh-e-Namdar* (Leader of a renowned force), *Aala-Taba* (of noble disposition), and *Shamsher-e-Jang-Bahadur* (the sword of the State).

The titles of *Diwan* and *Raja* were considered to be the highest titles awarded on the civil side, and, it appears, were sparingly bestowed. The title of *Diwan* was normally given to the Maharaja's courtiers dealing with finance; for example, *Diwan Bhawani Das* and *Diwan Ganga Ram*. As a special case, this title was also awarded to *Diwan Mohkam Chand*, a soldier.

The title of *Raja* was given to the Dogra brothers : *Gulab Singh*, *Dhian Singh* and *Suchet*

Maharaja Ranjit Singh's System of Honours and Awards

By : Lt. Col. Gulcharan Singh (Retd.)

Singh; and also to *Hira Singh* the only son of *Raja Dhian Singh*. This title was also given to the *Attariwala Sardars* such as *Raja Chattar Singh* and his son *Sher Singh*. *Raja Dhian Singh* was, just before the death of the Maharaja granted the title of *Naibulsaltanat-i-Asmat*, *Khair-khwah-i-Samini-i-Daulat-i-Sarkar-i-Kurba*, *Wazir-i-Asim*, *Dastur-i-Muazzam*, *Mukhtar-i-Mulk*.

Sardar. The title of *Sardar* (also known as *Izat-i-Sardari*) was considered of considerable distinction and was almost always bestowed upon Sikh jagirdars and military and civil officers. Some of the recipients of this honour were : *Hari Singh Nalwa*, *Gurmukh Singh Lamba*, *Dal Singh Naherna*, etc. The recipients of this award did not consider any other title worth having.

Sometimes, by way of *alqab*, a few Persian and Panjabi words "expressive of a Sardar's exalted dignity or position were prefixed to this title", such as "*Bawaqar-Asim-ul-shan*", "*Al-i-Iqtadar*", etc.

Ecclesiastical titles. These were separate awards meant for *Granthis*, *Maulvis* and *Pandits*. These were awarded for their qualities of spirituality, nobility of life and conduct. The important ones were : *Brahm-murat* (image of divinity), *Ujjal-didar* (of bright looks), *Nirmal-budh* (of pure intelligence), *Kirpanidhan*, *Tarn-taran-do-jahan*.

Sometime these awards were mixed and seemed very high-sounding. For example, *Tej Singh* had the titles of *Ujjal-didar*, *Nirmal-budh*, *Sardar-i-Bawaqar*, *General-i-Awwal*, *Samsam-ud-daula*, *Safdar Jang Bahadur*; and one of the

Sandhanwalia Sardars had the titles of *Ujjal didar*, *Nirmal budh*, *Al-i-tabar*, *Laiq-i-Altarf*, *Qudwa-i-Sarkardah-Hai-Namdar*, *Zubda-i-Saramdah-i-Rozgar*, *Sardar-i-wala Iqtadar*, *Shuja-ud-daula*, *Sardar Attar Singh Sandhanwalia*, *Shamsher-Jang-Bahadur*.

Star of the Panjab

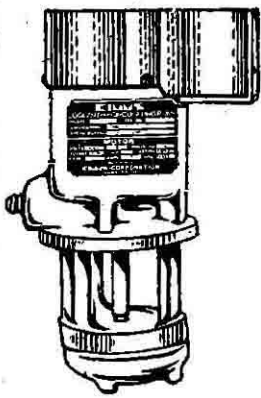

Where *Ranjit Singh* had adopted the European methods of training his army, he had also followed some of their systems of bestowing honours and awards on his subjects. In this wain, he had instituted an Order of Merit known as *Kaukab-i-Iqbal-i-Panjab* (Star of the Prosperity of the Panjab). This was introduced in March 1837, at the time of the marriage of his grandson, *Prince Nao Nihal Singh*. The Prince was also appointed the Grand Master of the Order.

The Star was represented by a large gold medal of three different classes depending upon the nature of the precious stones each was ornamented with. The three classes corresponded to the three grades of the order which they represented. The medal bore an effigy of *Maharaja Ranjit Singh* in bust in the centre on the side, while on the other side, the name of the Maharaja was artistically engraved in the *minakari* work. The medal was provided with a silk riband of gold and scarlet colours (*Surkh-o-Zard*), and the recipient was expected to wear it round his neck (*dar gulu awezan khwaband bud*), so that the medal itself rested on the breast of the wearer. The medal was in the shape of a star with ten rays radiating from the centre. Five of these rays were longer, and the long and the short rays alternated. The size of the medal was 2 1/4 inches (*yak girah*).

First class. The medal of the First class was set with a diamond (*Murrassa-ba-almas*). The admission to this class was limited to the members of the Royal family, and a few distinguished chiefs and noblemen who had proved their devotion and loyalty to the person of the Maharaja and his House. This carried with it the title of *Raja* and a *khillat* comprising a sword, as shield, a pair of gold bracelets, a golden chain set with pearls (*mala-marvarid*) and a *serpech* for the turban.

Second class. The medal of this class had two precious
(Continued on page 9)

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The Young Martyrs

By : Dr. Ganda Singh, Patiala

The tradition of martyrdom among the Sikhs began with the fifth Guru, Guru Arjan, who was tortured to death in 1606 under the orders of Emperor Jahangir. The ninth Guru, Teg Bahadur, was executed in Delhi in 1675 during the reign of Aurangzeb. Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and last Guru, had to fight as many as 14 battles against the local and imperial forces. After his twelfth battle he had to leave his ancestral home at Anandpur on the night of December 20-21, 1704, towards the Malwa territory, south of the river Sutlej.

The martyrdom of younger Sahibzadas—Baba Zorawar Singh and Baba Fateh Singh falls on December 27, this year.

Guru Gobind Singh's pursuers attacked him all of a sudden on the left bank of the Sarsa rivulet on the morning of December 21, 1704. In the confusion that followed in crossing the flooded stream, the companions of the Guru and his family were scattered in different directions. The Guru, his elder sons, Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh, and some of his followers went towards Chamkaur, while his aged mother and younger sons accompanied a servant, Gangu, to his village of Saheri on the Ropar-Morinda Road.

Sons Betrayed

While the Guru was facing thousands of his Mughal besiegers at Chamkaur, on December 22, with a band of forty Sikhs, in an unequal fight in which both his elder sons and most of his companions were killed, his mother and his younger sons were betrayed by their faithless servant to the nearest official at Morinda who, in turn, sent them on to Nawab Wazir Khan at Sirhind. There they were imprisoned in a tower known as Thanda Burj, or the Cold Tower.

Wazir Khan was the Guru's worst enemy. He had been commissioned by Emperor Aurangzeb to suppress the rising power of the Sikhs. Writhing like a snake at his failure to kill or capture the Guru, he thought he could wreck his vengeance upon his sons.

The boys were produced before the Nawab on December 24, and were told that their father, elder brothers and Sikhs had been killed in Chamkaur

and that 'your only hope of escape now is to bow before the viceroy and accept Islam'. The boys resolutely refused the offer and prepared to lay down their lives at the altar of their faith. Finding them adamant and feeling that as little children they might be persuaded or frightened into consent, he sent them away for the night to the prison.

Next morning, December 25, the same methods were tried again, but nothing could divert them from the path of Sikhism. This exasperated the Nawab and he called upon Sher Muhammad Khan of Malerkotla, who happened to be present, to take the boys away and kill them in retaliation for the deaths of his brother and nephew killed in the battle of Chamkaur. But the brave Afghan refused to kill the innocent children, one of whom was six years old, and the other eight. "Both I and my followers are soldiers and whoever opposes up in open war, we either kill him or are killed ourselves, but what you propose", said, Sher Muhammad Khan, "is the business of an executioner". Saying this he left the Darbar and went away.

Bricked Up Alive

Wazir Khan then ordered the boys to be bricked up alive in a small temporary tower to be raised on the spot. With every rising layer, they were asked to agree to the Nawab's proposal and become Muslims, but they stood unshaken, true to their faith, till the tower rose to their noses and they

were suffocated into unconsciousness. All of a sudden, then, the structure tumbled down. And the unconscious boys were ordered to be removed to the prison-tower.

On regaining their consciousness, they were summoned again to the Darbar on the third day, December 27, but no threats of torture, no fear of death could frighten them; nor could the promises of a comfortable future lure them to abjure their faith.

Zorawar Singh, at one stage, looked at his younger brother and said: "Here is this noble family of ours—a man like Guru Gobind Singh, our father, a man like Guru Teg Bahadur, our grandfather, a man like Guru Har Gobind, our great grandfather. We, who are their descendants, cannot attach a stigma to their memories".

Throats Cut

All efforts having failed to bring the boys to the path of Islam, Wazir Khan ordered them to be put to death. In an instant, the executioner's hands fell upon them and their throats were cut with a butcher's knife. Thus ended the ghastly tragedy that was enacted on the stage of Sirhind during the last week of 1704.

The Guru's mother died of grief in prison—burj—on hearing of the death of her grandson.

A memorial, with the name of Fatehgarh Sahib, was raised here six years later, in 1710, during the short reign of Banda Singh. Maharaja Karam Singh of Patiala renamed the district of Sirhind as Fatehgarh Sahib.

Gurdwara Joti Sarup, where the young martyrs and their grandmother were cremated is situated about a mile to the south-east of Fatehgarh Sahib.

Romance Of Early Morning

By : Bhagat Puran Singh

If one wants to see the romance of an early rising one would do well to visit Shri Darbar Sahib, Amritsar, in the early hours of the morning when the devotees begin to pour in from 2-30 A.M. The whole atmosphere at that time is surcharged with religious ecstasy. The singing of the holy hymns, the recitation of *gurbani* and the very attitude of the devotees create a celestial atmosphere and the reflection of the Golden Temple in the sacred tank gives one the impression that one is in heaven and not on the earth. After all what is heaven but a picture of the noblest thoughts and highest aspirations of the human mind. The Guru has brought it down to this earth. During the early hours in Sri Darbar Sahib when every heart is free from worldly pulls, when evils are yet asleep, and the wicked one is yet not awake, the lovers of God see Him face to face.

Sikhs are the children of the holy morning. Thoreau found all the glory of Iliad and the Odyssey in the morning hours, and Sikhs under the influence of the early hours enact these heroic exploits of Homer.

What can possibly happen to a man if he combines his practice of early rising with the reading and hearing of sacred texts in poetry or music? In the early morning when man has not drowned himself in the cares, anxieties and other entanglements of life his mind is free to think and take new impressions when nothing else disturbs or confuses his thought processes. To what heights those persons can be lifted who go to the religious places like Sri Darbar Sahib at 3 A.M. and there hear texts like *Sukhmani Sahib* (*The Psalm of Peace*) and *Asa-Di-Var*—the texts which are the charts of ideal human behaviour and conduct, which teach one to regulate his life after the pattern his Creator intended for him can be judged from the following lines:

Rich emanations] of some pregnant mind
Bright gems of thought in happy words enshrined
That lend our life a higher tone,
And touch within men's hearts chords
To themselves unknown.

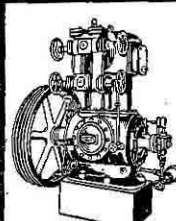
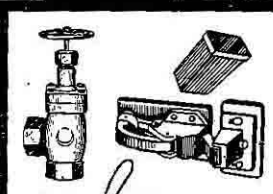
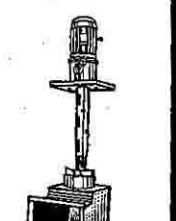
Let us pray:


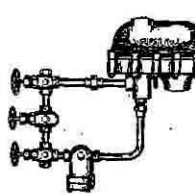
O True King! O Loved Father! in these ambrosial hours of the morn we have sung. Thy sweet hymns, heard Thy life-giving Word, and have discoursed on Thy manifold blessings. May these things find loving place in our hearts and serve to draw our souls toward Thee.


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She was very critical of what was happening in Southall. He was arguing that now you have got Women's Akali Dal, why don't you join us? His reason was hollow, as he was putting his case only before those who were deeply involved in this party political game. "He was a born politician", she winked and said in low tone so that others would hear it well.

In the heated argument that followed, no one could clearly understand or even hear what was the point. Everyone was talking and no one listening till another lady appeared on the scene with another flag of the Istri Akali Dal. So now there were two Shriromani Akali Dals of men and two women Akali Dals in Southall, with a common platform, common programme of showing one another down. One was inaugurated by one woman leader from India and the other by the other belonging to rival parties. So all this was not faith but politics in the name of faith!

The argument was advanced that behind every successful man there is a woman's hand to inspire, guide, even lead to success or victory. Whether this woman is mother, sister or wife is not an argument. It was Nanki who recognised greatness, first of all, in her brother, Nanak. It was Radha who made Krishna the Lord of creation. She was his first Bhagat. Where would Siva be without Parvati and Aurobindo without the mother? But why did Gautama leave his wife sleeping in the dead of night to gain salvation? Why did Rama Krishna not live with his wife?

Do you know? — "Woman is man's greatest weakness—not the strength! Look what happened to the Rajputs. They had to offer their daughters to the Mughals and with what results?"

Now there was calm in the hall. The Chairperson has been able to restore order. One lady was allowed to expound her faith. She said that all faiths originate from the Vedas—the ancient Indian texts of socio-cultural philosophy. In the Rig Vedas (R.K. 85—46) there is a blessing to the bride: "Be a queen to the father-in-law; a queen to thy mother-in-law; queen to thy sisters-in-law and a queen to thy brothers-in-law". The wife's place in the household is an exalted one. She is not a slave but a master as another hymn (RX 85—26) makes it clear. "Go to thy house so that thou mayest be the household's mistress; a ruler of household, thou wilt address the assembly".

Earth is also addressed as mistress in Atharva Veda (xii. 1.1.) "May that Earth, the mistress of our past and future make a wide world for us". The Vedic custom of marriage was

such that bridegroom was given to the bride—in order to establish the dignified position of the woman.

Some of the Vedic poetry is very romantic. Bride is called Surya (Sun), is given over to the groom to admire her with his heart. Kalidas, in his epic story of Shakuntala, gives a most wonderful description of a bride's beauty reminiscent of the Rig Vedas: "Lovely was the Surya's robe, decorated by the gatha song. Thought was the pillow of her couch, sight was the unguent of her eyes. Her jewellery was sky and earth when Surya to her husband went".

Woman in marriage is the harbinger of good fortune and she is exhibited as a priceless gift—"Come all of you and look at her—wish her full happiness". Woman is a *sohagan*. In conjugal unity, the husband, addressing the wife, says: "I am song (*saman*), thou art hymn. (Rik). I am heaven, thou art earth". It is a mutual love and a lifelong union of joint life.

"Oh Gods! with constant offerings—husband and wife wilt with one accord pass out and wash the Soma juice" (R. viii. 31.5). There is no question of male domination but in the *Grahasath Ashram* the heroism of Kshatriya and the romanticism of the conjugal life are intermingled. It is the Buddhist and the Jainist philosophy that opposes both these ideas in their emphasis on asceticism. This is a torture to woman under these conditions.

A Sikh groom comes to the door of the bride on a horse with a sword. He conquers his bride in the perfect martial sense. It was the consort of Guru Gobind, who was asked to put in sugar (*Patasas*) when Amrit was being prepared. Consorts of Sikh Gurus took part in daily routines and Sikh women attend the Gurdwara for prayer with them. Sikhs give equality to women but are still largely influenced by the Hindu cultural ideas to a great extent.

It is no secret that Hindu culture is built round a family, in which father, son and grandson are supreme. Patriarchal family runs from the pre-Vedic times. The father was the lord and master of the family. The *pitris*—males watched over the family. The son is the saviour of the family, carrying the *Kula* forward. Manu's laws further tightened the hold of male over the female in the Hindu culture.

When the Aryans later spread

and lived in the valleys of the Jamuna and the Ganges, the father's status was raised to the great Gurus. After the age of expansion when the Indian culture entered the second stage of resistance to the foreign rulers after 997 A.D., the position of women in Indian culture still worsened. Inter-marriages between the three main castes became further rare. That was the age of Savitri, Sita, Arundhati, Anasuya, when the lapse of women from chastity was looked down upon in order to prevent sons being born of mixed descent. This was the age of *Jauhar* and the *Sati*.

Guru Nanak emphatically spoke against Sati, though British rulers greatly helped to prevent it from India. But with the intensification of Muslim invasions, women were molested, converted and forcibly taken away. Now, therefore, joint family became more rigid. There was left no scope for freedom. Women, the most coveted of possessions, were protected, treasured in families by infant marriage, in many cases by *puddah*.

There is then this evil of dowry to top it all. Grooms leave their wives after marriage. The mother-daughter-in-laws quarrels are no less frequent here in U.K. The worst of the Indian culture is sticking like a leech.

Is there a way out? Is there a hope? Women of all Asian countries' all religions, are beginning to think of their position in this male dominated world.

One lady said: "Yes. My Akali Dal will fight these social evils from the society."

All these parties, elections, committees, strifes, struggles of life are phases of *Maya*, the universal illusion and, strange as it is, it may seem this *Maya* is described in Gurbani as the female gender. The *Jivatma* is also addressed as female. Once a person is caught in the web of *Maya*, that is doom. In Asa M 5 (A.G. 371). Guru warns:—

"He who loveth Maya, him, she eateth.

He who comforts her, him

she filleth with immense fear.

Brothers, friends and family, lured by her, indulge in strife."

Can we pray for all those egocentric worldly seekers of *Maya*—?

"Lord have mercy on them so that, with ease, the poison of *Maya* is neutralized within them. Grant them Thy *Nama* in The Eternal *Mantram*, the Treasure of Peace."

But will they accept it—those who proclaim: *Soora so pehchanie jo lare dien ke het?* He alone is brave who fights for the Faith.

One can only feel sorry at recent happenings in our religious bodies. Guru says in Asa M. 5. (A.G. 385).

"Abiding at the holy places, none are torn by ego; And when I see the Pundits, they too are swept off by *Maya*"—

In the household, men are torn by care or ego, and the more one goeth the way of works, the more one is involved"—"By lust, wrath and ego men were ruined" Asa M. 5. (A.G. 389).

Instead of the ego of presidency and hatred, let us all love all others and, through love of people, love God, our Lord. Because Guru says in Asa M. 5 (A.G. 396).

"In the Love of God is Eternal Bliss.

In the Love of God, pain touches one not.

In the Love of God, the dirt of ego is cleansed.

In the Love of God, one becomes Pure forever.

Hear thou friends, such Love and Affection to the Lord

Is forever the support of every life and every heart."

—Faith is Dharma and Dharma is that which sustains and banishes ego.

"But he whom is His Grace uniteth He him with the saints."

"He on whom Nanak is the Guru in Grace, He forever is redeemed and saved."

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Interesting Light On Ancient Punjab

By : Dr. V.C. Pandey

During the last decade the Punjab has witnessed three important archaeological excavations which have greatly widened the horizons of our knowledge of the ancient Punjab. The earliest of these was the excavation Department of Ancient Indian History, at Chandigarh conducted by the Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology of the Punjab University in 1969 the excavations at Sanghol were undertaken by the Department of Archaeology of the Punjab Government in 1968-73, 1978 and 1980. And lastly the Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology of the Punjab University conducted excavations at Singh Bhagwantpur in 1980.

Harappan Culture

The excavations at Chandigarh which were conducted in Sector 17 near the Central State Library have pushed back the antiquity of this modern city to the second millennium B.C. They have revealed for the first time that Chandigarh was a Harappan town with a rivulet in the south of its cemetery. The stone saddle querns and rubbers discovered at the site clearly suggest that the people were familiar with cultivation. The large number of earthen pots of different shapes and sizes constitute the major part of their material equipment. They include large storage jars, water jars, beakers, dishes, dishes-on-stand, bowls ring-stands, carinated hands and goblets. Most of them are red wares, some of them have paintings over them. Among other finds at the site are glazed bangles, faience earrings, carnelian beads and a terracotta cart wheel.

But the Chandigarh site is best known for its Harappan cemetery which has thrown up as many as nine skeletons laid in north-south orientation in the graves. One of these graves has a twin burial. The fact that the dead were lowered in their graves with ornaments on them and some articles of daily use placed around them supports the postulation that the Harappans of Chandigarh believed in life hereafter. The grave goods include pottery, personal ornaments and a terracotta toy cart wheel. It was probably conformity with their specific socio-religious custom that the bodies in the graves were rested on their backs with their heads

invariably pointing towards the north and feet towards the south. As was the case with the Harappans at Harappa, Ropar, Lothal and Kalibangan, their habitation area at Chandigarh must have existed in the north-east, east and south-east of their cemetery.

Aryan Successors

Excavations at Sanghol near Morinda have produced more extensive results in so far as they have brought to light eightfold cultural sequence belonging to different periods. The earliest cultural phase here belongs to 2000 B.C. when the late Harappans lived here in mud houses. Their earthen ware, generally red slipped, and sometimes painted in black, include handled vases carinated handis, storage jars, 'dishes-on-stand, beakers and bowls'. The betray technical and typological similarities with the ceramic material dug out at Chandigarh and Bara. The beads and bangles excavated at the site are indicative of their fondness for ornaments.

It appears that the Harappans were succeeded by the Aryans who have left behind them a typical earthen ware, known as the painted grey ware, which is generally associated with the Mahabharata age. Its discovery at Sanghol clearly proves that it was a flourishing town around 1000 B.C. That Sanghol continued to be a flourishing town during

the Buddhist and the Mauryan periods is attested by the discovery of the north black polished ware. By the time of the Sungas the people of Sanghol had come to use burnt bricks to construct their houses in a big fashion. They had also developed an underground drainage system. The Sunga age is known for its terracotta art which has left behind it some of its good specimens in the form of elephant figurines at Sanghol.

Foreign Influence

Later, Sanghol, like many other towns of the Punjab had to face the fury of foreign invasions. That it was occupied by the Parthians is suggested by the coins of Gondophares, their greatest king. It was probably due to a constant fear of foreign invasions that the people had fortified this town with defensive wall and three moats running along it. To the Kushana period belong a stupa and a monastery in the middle of the fortified pentagon. They provide evidence of the flourishing state of Buddhism in the region. The fortification suffered demolition, probably on account of the Huna invasion. The coins of Toramana and Mihirakula, the two Huna kings have been unearthed at Sanghol.

It appears from the excavations that Sanghol was abandoned by the people in the wake of the Huna invasions. Evidence of its re-occupation by the people comes from the early medieval people. The coins of such Muslim rulers as Balban and Alauddin Khilji have been found here.

The last cultural phase at Sanghol is indicated by the remains of a palatial building of some Sikh chieftain of the nineteenth century.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh...

(Continued from page 6)

stones—a diamond and an emerald (almas-o-zummured)—set in it. These stones were lesser in value than the ones set in the medal for the First Class. This was bestowed upon the loyal courtiers, notable sardars, governors of provinces, generals of the army and ambassadors or very high officials in political service. This award carried with it the title of *Sardar* and a *khillat* comprising a sword, a shield and a pair of gold bracelets.

Third class. In this case the medal had a single emerald set in the medal, and there were no stones of any other kind. This was awarded to (a) the military officers of the rank of colonel, major or captain who had earned distinction for bravery, resourcefulness, alertness and faithfulness; (b) civil servants distinguished for ability and honesty; and (c) other persons worthy of greater confidence and honour. This class was accompanied by the title of *Bahadur*, and a *khillat* comprising a sword, and a pair of gold bracelets.

The first recipients of this medal were the three princes: Kharak Singh, Sher Singh and Nao Nihal Singh. Then came the Dogra brothers, followed by the Sandhanwalia and Majithia Sardars, and Dhanna Singh Malwai. Later, it was awarded to certain British subjects also. (The one awarded to the First Earl of Auckland, Governor General in India, is now lying in the Medal room of the Punjab State Museum, Patiala).

Order of Ranjit Singh

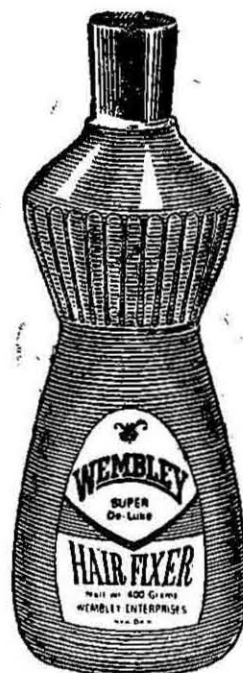
The other medal instituted by Maharaja Ranjit Singh was the "Order of Ranjit Singh". This medal bore the gold plaited head of the Maharaja in relief, surrounded on three sides with white, green and red coloured precious stones. The space left between these had two bullocks facing each other.

General

The recipients of awards, if afterwards found guilty of any crime or offence, were bereft of these honours and their names were struck off the Government Register.

The languages used for these awards were: Punjabi, Persian, Arabic, Sanskrit and Hindi.

The Maharaja was of the opinion that the delayed appreciation of a good deed done lost its charm. As such, he had made it his habit to reward an act of gallantry or any other good deed on the spot. Hence, the cash and the other articles required for this purpose were always carried along with him on tours and campaigns in a big box known as *Baiha Toshakhana*.



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OUR PUNJAB NEWSLETTER

Political Reconciliation Possible In Punjab

By : Sardar Bharpur Singh

There is no doubt that there is a growing intensification of agitations against the Congress (I) Governments in all the States. Punjab is no exception. In Punjab the students' agitation, the farmers' agitation has shown no relaxation—if at all the students are more actively demonstrating against bus-fare hike and have burnt many buses and damaged many more—though admittedly they are not affected by the rise in bus fares. They are being backed, sponsored and supported by the anti-Congress (I) political parties and to some extent by general public also as they are affected. Government Departments concerned have never cared to explain the official viewpoint which had necessitated the rise in bus-fares.

The Chief Minister Sardar Darbar Singh had to go to Jullundur Radio to explain the general public by a well reasoned broadcast that due to the rise

The Nirmalas . . .

(Continued from page 5)

Punjabi both in Gurmukhi script and Devnagari script. Sant Nikka Singh translated Yoga Vasishtha into Braj and wrote it in Punjabi script. Sant Nihal Singh Nirmala wrote a Sanskrit commentary on the 'Japu' of Guru Granth Sahib. Tara Singh Narotam also produced a few good books such as Gurdwara Darshan etc. The Urdu language was also enriched by them, as they produced a lot of literature in it for their missionary work.

In 1861 their central organisation to coordinate their activities.

It was in this year that yellow flag of Guru Gobind Singh with 'khanda' super-imposed was flown on the building known as 'Dharma Dvaja' where the meeting was held to establish the aforesaid organisation.

The Nirmalas are the Khalsa, having full faith in Guru Granth Sahib, Khande-ki-Pahul, five 'akars' i.e. to say sword, unshorn hair, a pair of shorts (Kachha), comb, iron bracelet. The names of all Nirmalas end with 'Singh'. They do not follow udasis who keep knotted hair (Jatas) and whose names end with 'Das'.

Though they adopt outer symbols, yet they are clear that these without inner purity and discipline have got no meaning. These days, their headquarter is at Kankhal.

in the prices of petrol, mobile oil, which have been raised very much by the Arab Oil producing Countries over which no other country has any control and also to the rise in the prices of tyres, tubes and other parts, the cost of running the buses has risen many times over.

Besides, the staff in the transport undertakings has been or rather had to be given due to their agitation an increase in their pay and allowances—the cost of running buses has risen many-fold and the increase in the bus fare had become inevitable if the transport was to survive. Despite all this, the students' agitation is not showing signs of abatement.

As regards the farmers' agitation, first for the immediate increase in the price of sugarcane and then in the increase of other agricultural produce, viz., foodgrains, generally is also being backed, supported and guided by the anti-Congress (I) political parties apparently to win favour with the agriculturists, the landlords, their tenants and the labour as all will benefit proportionately by the rise in the prices of field produce. The political parties which are agitating and backing the agitation little realise the effect of their agitation on the public at large.

In the case of price rise of sugarcane, the price of sugar, gur and shakkar will still further rise and may go up in the free sale market from the present Rs. 10—12/- per kilo to Rs. 15—20 per kilo and in the controlled sales—the price of levy sugar may or will have necessarily to be not less than Rs. 5/-per kilo.

In the case of rise of wheat prices to Rs. 150 per quintal the present price of atta viz. Rs. 2/-per kilo may rise to Rs. 3/-per kilo. The maize atta, the bajra atta, basen (gram atta) will also rise proportionately. It is not the general public interest which is involved in all these agitations, it is the interest of anti-Congress (I) political parties which will be served if public discontent spreads, there is a general wave of disturbances which may put great strain on the resources of the present government.

The basic idea behind these agitations, whether in Punjab or in any other State, is to make the situation as uncomfortable as possible. In consequence the government in power will have

to keep the services and the labour satisfied by increasing their wages and putting burden on all the government's money resources and reserves to a breaking point and depletion in economy. This is the game which the promoters of the agitations are playing to dethrone the present governments. Those who may eventually replace the present governments will have to face the very difficulties which they are creating and if they too are unable to control the situation riots and the revolution are in the offing. If the prices of food items become prohibitive and beyond the reach of common man, the situation may arise which no government whether the present or its successor may be able to meet and control. Those who sow wind have to reap whirlwind.

Sardar Darbara Singh, the Punjab Chief Minister, it appears, feels and may he fears, and apprehends that the situation may not get out of hand and for such reason being at the back of his mind has invited the leading opposition party viz. the leaders connected with the Sant Akali Dal, the C.P.I. and the C.P. (M) to meet him and discuss with him the present day difficult economic political and agitational trends in the situation prevailing in the State. The Chief Minister will have to persuade the ex-Chief Minister Sardar Parkash Singh Badal and

the C.P.I. and the C.P.(M) leaders not to pursue and intensify the students' agitation and the farmers' agitation and that they should look beyond the immediate political gains and above the party interests.

How far Sardar Darbara Singh will succeed can only be guessed at this stage. The correct position is that government does not want to lose the goodwill of the people (keeping in view their voting power) by being branded as incapable of meeting the present unsettled conditions.

The political parties—the Sant Akali Dal, the Talwandi Akali Dal, the C.P.I. the C.P.(M) and the C.P.(ML)—cannot afford to risk their position by withdrawing from the agitation without getting some concessions from the government viz. a reasonable reduction in bus fare and reasonable hike in field produce. If they succeed in this, they will have gained in their political reputation and standing and government will not be loser either by granting or yielding some concessions. The government reputation for fair play may increase though in lowering bus fare hike they may lose a little financially and the public at large may have to bear burden—not a little by conceding farmers' demands for raising prices of field produce.

MATRIMONIAL

Parents invite correspondence from Sikh medical doctors, desiring to immigrate and qualified to practice in California, for their daughter, 24 years old, 5 ft. 4 inches, doctor in a medical field. Belongs to a respectable Jat Sikh family, well-settled in U.S.A. Please send full details—educational and family background—with recent photograph, in the first instance to 6452 North Kennedy Drive, FRESNO, CALIFORNIA, U.S.A. 93710.



Letter to the Editor**Unemployment Among Sikhs**

Sir, The Union Government and State Governments are all making sincere efforts for solving the unemployment problem of the country under the intelligent and dynamic leadership of Smt. Indira Gandhi.

The Sikhs are very progressing and hard-working people. They are one of the first rate communities in the world. We should, therefore, solve this unemployment problem of ours ourselves and thus help our Government.

The leading Sikh businessmen, in collaboration with S.G.P.C., Amritsar, and D.S.G.P.C., Delhi, should set up large scale units in industrially backward districts with Sikh concentration where central government gives 15% subsidy also, besides, various tax exemptions and other benefits. Or they should set up projects in 'Kandla Free Trade Zone', which is duty-free or in 100% export oriented 'Bombay Electronic Complex' where import policy of government is much more liberalised.

The unemployed persons should set up small scale Industries or form Industrial Co-operative Societies preferably in rural/backward districts to get more benefits and facilities or in partnerships with unemployed persons of weaker sections.

The unemployed persons, residing in Delhi and Chandigarh, can set up special 'household industries' in their houses also. The Government gives them 100% Government machinery loan upto Rs. 20,000/-. The rate of interest is 8% p.a. and repayment period is 7 years.

The unemployed persons of Delhi and Chandigarh can also set up 'tiny projects' with 95% Government machinery loan upto Rs. 80,000/-. The rate of interest is 9% p.a. and repayment period is 8 to 10 years.

My services are always at the disposal of the Sikh community for any guidance and assistance for solving the unemployment problem among the Sikhs or for any other industrial consultancy/representation problem in India or abroad.

--Amarjit Singh Ahluwalia
WZ-1E, Ravi Nagar

New Delhi.

Book Review**Simplicity And Service Purity And Prayer Was His Motto**

SADHU VASWANI, edited by Anant Pai, with artworks by Dalip Kadam; published by India Book House Education Trust, Bombay; pages 32; price Rs. 3.

IBH has been doing a signal service to all, especially children, by using the comic technique to propagate lives and views of our heroes, sages and cultural giants. This publication is the latest of the series, which has embraced, in all, 217 subjects so far.

Sadhu Vaswani is known to our readers for his illuminating exposition of the message and bani of Sikh Gurus. Though born a Hindu, he had taken to the Sikh scriptures, at a very early age and used to hold Gita and Sukhmani classes every day after his lectures at the college.

After a brilliant educational career, he continued in the teaching profession till his mother's death; he was at one time Principal of Mahendra College, Patiala. Then he plunged himself into service of humanity, first in Sind (now part of Pakistan) and then, after 1947 partition, in Pune, Maharashtra. He was a great champion of women and started the now-famous Mira College.

This booklet amply brings out his motto of simplicity and service as well as purity and prayer. Its measures squarely upto the high standards established by the Amar Chitra Katha series.

—Santokh Singh Bains

Punjab's Paltry Share In Public Sector

Punjab's share in public sector investment is pitifully low. It is just 22 per cent of Rs 345.52 crore out of the total investment of about Rs 17,000 crore. Even this low percentage was achieved during the last decade (1969-79). On March 31, 1969, the share was less than 1 per cent or Rs. 32.6 crore.

The Punjab State Industrial Development Corporation had received letters of intent for 55 projects. Of these 25 projects with a capital of Rs 49 crore had already been commissioned seven with a capital of Rs 35 crore were under construction and nine with an estimated investment of Rs 87 crore were being firmed up.

Out of the 72 applications for industrial licences received up to October this year only 13 were pending—11 are within the "prescribed limit" and two beyond the limit.

Akali Dal to move no-trust motion against Punjab Ministry

The Leader of the Opposition in the Punjab Assembly, Sardar Parkash Singh Badal, has said that no-confidence motion against the Darbara Singh Ministry will be moved in the next session of the Assembly.

The former Chief Minister said at a press conference in Bhatinda that as the date of the Vidhan Sabha session had not so far been officially announced, his party had not discussed this issue formally. This matter, he said, would also be discussed with the other Opposition parties.

He said they would strongly oppose Chief Minister Darbara Singh's move to revive the Punjab Vidhan Parishad which the Akali Government had abolished because the Parishad was a strain on the financial resources of the State.

Sardar Parkash Singh said the Chief Minister's move to appoint Congress (I) M.L.A.s as heads of various boards and corporations was "political corruption" and his party would oppose such appointments inside and outside the Assembly.

HERB FOR ASTHMA

A herb which relieves Asthma is distributed (to the poor) by Sri Keshav Mohan Lal, grandson of an eminent Political and Social leader late Sri Sambhu Nath of Rajasthan. This Herb was given to Sri Sambhu Nath by a Sanyasi and distributed by him for over 40 years free of charge. He was given Government pension for his selfless deeds but he delegated this task to his grandson and became a Sanyasi. Now his grandson is continuing the task but appeals to the well and rich to contribute in the noble cause. Many asthma sufferers including chronic patients have been relieved by taking only three doses of the herb. Sufferers may write for the Herb in English only to :

SRI KESHAV MOHAN LAL

P.B. No. 11463, Calcutta-6.

Dr. Neki proceeding on leave

The Managing Body of the P.G.I. Chandigarh, has sanctioned two months' leave to Dr. Jaswant Singh Neki, Director of the Institute, with effect from January 6.

In a letter to the Union Health Minister, Mr. B. Shankaranand, who is also the President of the Governing Body, Dr. Neki said he wanted to proceed on two months' leave "for catching up with various research and academic activities, which have suffered on account of my heavy administrative responsibilities as Director."

Court Notice

In the Court of Sh. B.L. Garg, DJS, Sub Judge, 1st Class, Delhi.

In the matter of application No. 641/80 from Mrs. Joy Adrienne Denfer W/o. Mr. Kenny Denfer R/o. 11 F-75, Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi-24 for a Succession Certificate under Act XXXIX of 1935.

To All concerned.

Whereas the above named applicant has applied for Succession Certificate to this Court Under Section 372 of the Indian Succession Act, 1925, in respect of debits/securities amounting to Rs. 17,000.00, said to be standing in the name of Mrs. E.J. Cannell deceased.

Whereas the 7th day of January, 1981 at 10 O'clock in the forenoon has been fixed for hearing of the application, notice is hereby given to all concerned.

Given under my hand and the seal of the court on this 26th day of November, 1980.

Sd/- Sub Judge, 1st Class, (Seal) Delhi.

In the Court of Sh. B.L. Garg, DJS, Sub Judge, 1st Class, Delhi.

In the matter of application No. 772/80 from Smt. Ram Piari W/o Shri Ichhar Mal R/o. 25-A/25, Vishwas Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi-32, for a Succession Certificate under Act XXXIX of 1935.

To All Concerned.

Whereas the above named applicant has applied for Succession Certificate to this Court under Section 372 of the Indian Succession Act, 1925, in respect of debits/securities amounting to Rs. 6138.68p, said to be standing in the name of Shri Mehnga Ram deceased.

Whereas the 22nd day of January, 1981 at 10 O'clock in the forenoon has been fixed for hearing of the application, notice is hereby given to all concerned.

Given under my hand and the seal of the court on this 19th day of December, 1980.

Sd/- Sub Judge, 1st Class, (Seal) Delhi.



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